

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-20 IGA-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07

H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01

SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 DRC-01 /118 W

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P R 181930Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4249

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

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DPET PASS AID

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, PINT, ASEC, JM

SUBJ: GOVERNMENT ORGANIZES TO FIGHT CRIME

1. SUMMARY: IN THE WAKE OF THREE MURDERS IN THE PAST FIVE DAYS WHICH HAVE SHOCKED THE NATION, THE PM ANNOUNCED ON MAR 16 A MAJOR REORGANIZATION OF PUBLIC SECURITY RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE CABINET AND A DETERMINED EFFORT TO ARREST THE APPARENT UPSURGE IN VIOLENT CRIMES IN JAMAICA. THE PM ALSO HELD CONSULTATIONS WITH OPPOSITION LEADERS. A JOINT SESSION OF PARLIAMENT IS SCHEDULED FOR MAR 18, TO PASS ON MEASURES PROPOSED BY GOVERNMENT.

2. ON MAR 14, LEO HENRY, THE SELF-MADE PROPRIETOR OF MODERN FURNISHINGS, ONE OF JAMAICA'S LEADING FURNITURE MANUFACTURERS AND RETAILERS, WAS SLAIN BY THREE GUNMEN IN THE PARKING LOT OF HIS BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENT LOCATED IN UPTOWN KINGSTON. HENRY WAS ACTIVE IN PHILANTHROPY, LEADER OF THE JAMAICAN TABLE TENNIS TEAM TO THE PRC LAST YEAR AND A RESPECTED COMMUNITY FIGURE.

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3. LATER THE SAME EVENING, DONALD HINES, A RETIRED JAMAICA TELE-

PHONE CO. EMPLOYEE WAS SHOT AND KILLED IN KINGSTON.

4. ON MAR 15, PAUL FITZ-RISTON, AN ATTORNEY AND CHAIRMAN OF NATIONAL SPORTS LTD., MANAGERS OF THE NATIONAL STADIUM COMPLEX AND JAMAICA'S MAJOR SPORTS IMPRESSARIO ORGANIZATION, WAS SHOT BY GUNMEN IN MONTEGO BAY.

5. FITZ-RISTON'S DEATH BRINGS TO A TOTAL OF SEVEN, THE NUMBER OF "PROMINENT" PERSONS MURDERED IN JAMAICA IN THE PAST THREE MONTHS.

6. ALTHOUGH MOST OF THE VICTIMS WERE ROBBED, NONE OF THEM CARRIED SIGNIFICANT AMOUNTS OF MONEY OR VALUABLES ON THEIR PERSONS.

7. VARIOUS JAMAICAN GROUPS, RANGING FROM THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE TO THE CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION HAVE ISSUED STATEMENTS ON THE SLAYINGS, URGING THE GOVT TO TAKE HARSH MEASURES TO RESTORE ORDER IN JAMAICA AND APPREHEND THE CRIMINALS INVOLVED.

8. AT THE END OF MARATHON MEETINGS OF CABINET OFFICERS AND AN ALL-DAY SEPCIAL CABINET SESSION ON MAR 16, THE PM ANNOUNCED LAST NIGHT THAT THERE WOULD BE FORMED A NEW MINISTRY OF NATIONAL SECURITY AND JUSTICE WHICH WOULD INCORPORATE THE OLD MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS AND JUSTICE, THE JAMAICA CONSTABULARY FORCE, THE JAMAICA DEFENCE FORCE AND THE PRISONS DEPT. ELI MATALON, THE FORMER MINISTER OF EDUCATION HAS BEEN TAPPED TO HEAD THE NEW MINISTRY IN PLACE OF THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS AND JUSTICE, NOEL SILVERA, WHO DECLINED ANOTHER CABINET POST "IN ORDER TO DEVOTE MORE TIME TO HIS CONSTITUENCY AND NATIONAL POLITICS."

9. COMPLETING THE CABINET LINEUP, THE MINISTER OF PENSIONS, HOWARD COOKE, WAS NAMED TO REPLACE MATALON AT EDUCATION; WINSTON JONES, FORMER MINISTER OF WORKS, WAS NAMED TO REPLACE COOKE AT PENSIONS; AND THE MINISTER IN CHARGE OF REGIONAL AFFAIRS SYDNEY PAGON WILL REPLACE JONES AT WORKS. ADDITIONALLY, TWO-TIME JAMAICA TEACHERS ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT FAY SAUNDERS WAS NAMED AS A SENATOR AND PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND THE PRINCIPAL OF MICO TEACHERS COLLEGE, ERROL MILLER WILL BE APPOINTMED AS PERMSEC IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION.

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10. THE EMBASSY HAS BEEN INFORMED THAT THE GOJ IS PLANNING A COMBINED JCF/JDF INTENSIVE, ISLAND-WIDE SEARCH AND ARREST OPERATION TO COMMENCE WITHIN THE NEXT 36 HOURS, FOR WHICH IT HAS REQUESTED EMERGENCY PROCUREMENT OF HAND-HELD ELECTRONIC SCANNERS.

11. COMMENT: WHILE THE CRIME SITUATION HAS DETERIORATED STEADILY OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF HOUSE-BREAKING IN MIDDLE-CLASS NEIGHBORHOODS, THE SLUM-DWELLERS HAVE BORNE

THE BRUNT OF VIOLENT CRIME. WITH THE SLAYINGS OF SEVERAL PROMINENT MIDDLE-CLASS BUSINESSMEN IN THE PAST SEVERAL DAYS, THE JAMAICAN ESTABLISHMENT AND MIDDLE CLASS HAVE BECOME MORE DIRECTLY INVOLVED THAN EVER BEFORE AND DEMANDS FOR THE GOVT TO "DO SOMETHING" HAVE REACHED NEW LEVELS.

12. THUS FAR, THERE ARE NO INDICATIONS THAT THE MURDERS OF HENRY AND FITZ-RISTON ARE CONNECTED OR THAT THEY WERE POLITICALLY MOTIVATED. THE BEST ESTIMATE IS, RATHER, THAT THEY WERE THE RANDOM VICTIMS OF MURDER/THIEVES, WHO DID THEIR THING AND THEN VANISHED INTO THE MULTITUDES.

13. THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE POLICE AND MILITARY FORCES UNDER ONE MINISTER, WHILE OF QUESTIONABLE DESIREABILITY ON CONSTITUTIONAL GROUNDS, MAY BE THE ONLY MEANS BY WHICH THE GOVT FEELS IT CAN MOBILIZE THE MANPOWER NECESSARY FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE CITIZENRY - THE POLICE ESTABLISHMENT IS UNDERMANNED AND RECRUITMENT IS ONLY BARELY ABLE TO KEEP UP WITH ATTRITION, LET ALON PROVIDE THE FORCE WITH THE ADDITIONAL MANPOWER IT NEEDS. WHETHER THE PM WILL RETAIN THE PORTFOLIO OF MINISTER OF DEFENSE IS NOT YET CLEAR AND THE POSITION OF MINISTER OF STATE DUDLEY THOMPSON IN THE NEW ORGANIZATION IS NOT YET KNOWN.

14. THE SELECTION OF ELI MATALON AS THE NEW MINISTER OF NATIONAL SECURITY AND JUSTICE IS A REFLECTION OF HIS SUPERIOR ORGANIZATIONAL ABILITIES. HE MAY WELL BE THE ONLY MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT WITH THE ABILITY TO BRING SOME ORDER TO THE NATIONAL SECURITY ARENA, BUT HIS SERVICES AS MINISTER OF EDUCATION WILL BE SORELY MISSED. IN ANY CASE, BY MAKING MAJOR ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES, THE PM HAS GIVEN CONCRETE EVIDENCE OF HIS INTENTION TO MANAGE THE PUBLIC SECURITY PROBLEM RATHER THAN MERELY ENGAGE IN MORE TALK ABOUT CRIME WITH NO ACTION.

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## Message Attributes

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